

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR)

Reflect. **Learn.** **Improve.** Perform Better.



An After Action Review (AAR) is a structured debrief that originated within the United States Army in the mid-1970s, used to analyze an event, project, or incident. Its primary goal is to promote learning and improve future performance by objectively identifying what went well, what missteps occurred, and what to change moving forward. The AAR process is most effective when centered around five core questions:



1

What was the intended result?

What were our specific goals, objectives, and success metrics?
What was the original plan, timeline, and budget?
What facilitators or barriers did we anticipate before starting?



2

What actually happened?

What are the objective facts and chronological events?
What were the actual results or deliverables produced?
Did the team communicate and execute tasks according to the plan?



3

Why was there a difference?

Why did specific successes or failures occur?
What were the root causes of the obstacles and pitfalls encountered?
What external factors influenced our execution relative to our initial strategy?



4

What did we learn?

What strengths should we aim to repeat in future projects?
What habits, communication styles, or processes need to be abandoned or refined?
If we could start over, what advice would we give ourselves?



5

What is our action plan?

Who is responsible for implementing these changes moving forward?
How will we institutionalize these lessons so they aren't lost?
What specific steps will we take on the very next project or event?